

Bike/Walk Midland Offers Economic Value

NMT can have a big financial impact, lowering individual transportation and health costs as well as generating additional economic activity in communities which embrace it.

Compared to US averages, Portland, OR residents drive 5,000 fewer miles & spend 175 fewer hours in cars, saving \$2,500 in automobile costs per year. Brown County, WI reports that houses adjacent to bicycling facilities sell faster and for 9% more than average. The *Consumer's Survey on Smart Choices for Home Buyers* has found that walking/bicycling/skating trails ranked as the second most important amenity out of a list of 18 choices for home buyers.

According to a study by the North Carolina DOT, investments in bicycle infrastructure generate a 9:1 return in increased tourism revenue. More than 80% of Portland, Oregon businesses emphatically state that Portland's reputation for being a bicycle friendly city is good for their business. A Colorado Department of Transportation study determined the total business activity from bicycling tourism, events, and retail sales are \$1 B per year in that state.

Those are some direct impacts, but there are also large health benefits both in reduced medical spending, better quality of life, and longer life expectancy. Regular exercise reduces depression, obesity, heart and lung disease, cancers, ADHD, osteoporosis, diabetes, dementia, and more. The US currently spends \$150B/yr treating the largely preventable obesity/diabetes epidemic.

Midland can gain its share of these benefits by embracing NMT.

For more information: www.midland-mi.org/government/departments/planning/Planning/planninghome.htm